

House Bill 1016 (AS PASSED HOUSE AND SENATE)

By: Representatives Lane of the 158<sup>th</sup>, Burns of the 157<sup>th</sup>, Knight of the 126<sup>th</sup>, and Jerguson of the 22<sup>nd</sup>

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

To amend Chapter 4 of Title 27 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to fish, so as to provide for the salt-water and fresh-water demarcation lines; to provide the commissioner of natural resources the ability to manage certain aspects of the blue crab resource; to provide an effective date; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

**SECTION 1.**

Chapter 4 of Title 27 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to fish, is amended by revising paragraph (1) of subsection (a) of Code Section 27-4-1, relating to the salt-water and fresh-water demarcation line, as follows:

"(1) The point at which U.S. Highway 17 crosses the following bodies of water and their tributaries shall be the line of demarcation for them: St. Marys River, Satilla River, South Altamaha River, Champney River, Butler River, Darien River, Little Ogeechee System (except Salt Creek), North Newport River, Medway River, Big Ogeechee River, and the point at which Georgia Highway 25 / South Carolina 170 crosses the Savannah River and its tributaries. All water seaward of these points shall be considered salt water; and"

**SECTION 2.**

Said chapter is further amended by revising subsection (j) of Code Section 27-4-151, relating to the use of crab traps, identification of boats or vessels, and closure of salt waters, as follows:

"(j) The commissioner shall have the power to close all or any portion of the ~~saltwaters~~ salt waters of this state to commercial and recreational fishing for blue crabs or any component of the blue crab fishery, including peeler, soft, or sponge crabs, ~~in the event of flood, drought, disease, or any other emergency situation or in the event of a disaster or other occurrence likely to cause seafood to be unfit for human consumption~~. Any determination to close the ~~saltwaters~~ salt waters pursuant to this subsection or to reopen such waters shall

1 be made in accordance with current, sound principles of wildlife research and management  
2 as provided by Code Section 27-4-130."

3 **SECTION 3.**

4 This Act shall become effective upon its approval by the Governor or upon its becoming law  
5 without such approval.

6 **SECTION 4.**

7 All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.